

## Message Text

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45

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 EB-11 COME-00

SCS-03 SCA-01 SY-10 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 DODE-00 USIE-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-15

DRC-01 /094 W

----- 042671

O 071848Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9748

INFO AMCONSUL MEDELLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 8287

E.O. 11652: GDS

SUBJECT: KIDNAPPING OF U.S. BUSINESSMEN

REF: SINN TELECONS WITH MAISTO ARA/NC 10/5/73 AND OP CENTER 10/7/73.

1. THIS TELEGRAM CONFIRMS INFORMATION EXCHANGED IN THE REFERENCED TELECONS REGARDING THE KIDNAPPING OF U.S. CITIZENS RENE FRANCIS KAST AND WILLIS LEON POTSON.
  2. LOCAL AGENT OF INTERNATIONAL MINING COMPANY JOHN SWAIN INFORMED EMBASSY ON OCTOBER 5 THAT KAST AND DOTSON ASSISTANT MANAGER AND ENGINEER RESPECTIVELY IN IMC-OWNED FRONTINO GOLD MINE HAD BEEN KIDNAPPED ABOUT 5 P.M. OCTOBER 4 WHILE TRAVELLING IN JEEP ON ROAD BETWEEN SEGOVIA AND ZARAGOSA IN ANTIOQUIA DEPARTMENT. KIDNAPPERS RELEASED KAST'S WIFE AND AUSTRALIAN COUPLE (NAME UNKNOWN) WHO HAD ALSO BEEN TRAVELLING IN JEEP. NOTE DELIVERED TO FRONTINO MANAGER ROBERT SWAIN DEMANDS 4 MILLION PESOS (ROUGHLY 166,000 DOLLARS) FOR RELEASE OF KAST AND DOTSON AND THREATEN THEIR DEATHS IF POLICE NOTIFIED. COLOMBIAN FARMER JESUS GOMEZ HERNANDEZ WHO WAS TRAVELLING SEPARATELY IN AREA WAS KIDNAPPED AT SAME TIME.
  3. SWAIN NOTIFIED GOVERNOR OF ANTIOQUIA WHO IN TURN ALERTED POLICE AND ARMY AUTHORITIES. GOVERNOR TOLD SWAIN IT WAS GOC POLICY NOT REPEAT NOT TO PAY RANSOM. EMBASSY HAS ESTABLISHED LIAISON WITH
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POLICE AND ARMY IN BOGOTA AND CONSUL MEDELLIN IS IN TOUCH WITH

FRONTINO MANAGER, ANTIOQUIA GOVERNOR, AND 4TH ARMY BRIGADE COMMANDER.

4. ACCORDING TO SWAIN IMC BOARD MET IN N.Y. AND DECIDED THAT FIRST CONSIDERATION WAS SAFETY OF KAST AND DOTSON. IMC THEREFORE WILLING PAY RANSOM IF IT WILL INSURE THEIR RELEASE. GOC AUTHORITIES NOT INFORMED OF THIS DECISION. FRONTINO MANAGER IS NOW AT MINE AWAITING FURTHER CONTACT AND INSTTSTRUCTIONS FROM KIDNAPPERS.

5. BRIEF STORIES CARRIED IN BOGOTA NEWSPAPERS "EL TIEMPO" AND "EL ESPECTADOR" OCTOBER 7. BOTH CITE SOURCE AS PARISH PRIEST IN TOWN OF SEGOVIA. NAMES OF VICTIMS SCRAMBLED AND "EL TIEMPO" IDENTIFIES THEM AS GERMAN RATHER THAN U.S.CITIZENS.  
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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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